

People, technology and innovation

Patrick Kadama reports from TICAD7 on Japan's evolving support for Africa

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) has become a foundation for promoting partnerships for Africa's development. The seventh such conference was held in Yokohama 28–30 August 2019 as TICAD 7, which brought together policy makers and development experts for dialogue on development policies to strengthen future collaboration between Japan and Africa. Participants included 42 African leaders from 53 African countries, 52 development partner countries, 108 heads of international and regional organisations, and representatives of civil society and the private sector.

Under the theme of 'Advancing Africa's development through people, technology and innovation', various side events (seminars and symposiums as well as exhibitions) demonstrated Japan's inclusive approach to engaging African stakeholders in articulating their development support programme.

An official side event titled 'Health Workforce Investment as a Driver of Universal Health Coverage and Economic Development' was co-organised by IntraHealth International and the Japan Centre for International Exchange (JCIE). The keynote address, given by Professor Keizo Takemi, a member of the Japanese House of Councillors and a Senior Fellow of JCIE, provided the platform for showcasing experiences from Kenya and Uganda. The side event also was the forum for a panel discussion by experts reflecting on health workforce implications for UHC and on a Dialogue for the Future of Health Workforce Development in Africa led by Professor Francis Omaswa, the Executive Director of the African Centre for Global Health and Social Transformation (ACHEST). Addressing participants at another side meeting, Prof Omaswa cautioned against commercialising UHC through marketing of various diagnostics and pharmaceutical agencies.

The Third Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize Award Ceremony was hosted by the Right Honourable Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe. It was held in the presence of The Royal Majesties



Recipients of the 3rd Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize Award, Professor Francis Omaswa and Professor Jean-Jacques Muyembe

the Emperor and Empress of Japan and was attended by many African Heads of State. The laureates of the Third Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize are: Dr Jean-Jacques Muyembe from Democratic Republic of the Congo, who was awarded the Medical Research category and was recognised for his work on the control of Ebola Virus Disease; and Dr Francis Omaswa, who was awarded the Medical Services category and was recognised for ground-breaking work on the health workforce as well as for a commitment to deliver services in hard-to-reach rural areas of Africa. In his acceptance speech, he re-affirmed his commitment to public good initiatives for better health outcomes in the rural setting of African communities.

The Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize honours men and women with outstanding achievements in the fields of medical research and medical services in combating infectious and other diseases in Africa, thus contributing to the health and welfare of the African people and of all humankind. The prize is awarded in memory of Dr Hideyo Noguchi and is managed by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The awarding of the Noguchi Prize is planned as a keynote event at the TICAD forum and as a part of the Japanese health development programme

for Africa.

Japan's contributions for society in Africa in the coming years will include an Initiative to Promote Universal Health Care for Health and Wellbeing in Africa with the aim of:

- Improving access to primary health care and hygiene and expanding insurance to 3 million people; training people to promote UHC in line with the G20 Shared Understanding on the Importance of financing for UHC in Developing Countries;
- Developing collaboration agreements with five countries to deepen cooperation and promoting health care businesses under the Africa Health and Wellbeing Initiative;
- Contributing to improving child nutrition through the Initiative for Food and Nutrition Security in Africa and hosting the Tokyo Nutrition Summit 2020;
- Saving the lives of 500,000 patients with AIDS, TB and Malaria and vaccinating around 800,000 children; hosting GAVI launch meeting of the 3rd Replenishment for vaccination; enhancing research and development into neglected tropical diseases and treatment of zoonosis.